

friends. At the same time the worthy scientist slipped a twenty-franc piece into the young man's hand as remuneration for his trouble. This discreetly veiled charity at least saved Zola from actual starvation during the festive season; but his heart remained heavy, and his feelings were not devoid of envy when he found that several of the doctor's cards were addressed to the prosperous parents of his former school-fellows at St. Louis.

However, a month later, February, 1862, he entered the "Bureau du Matériel" at Hachette's establishment, his salary being fixed at a hundred francs a month, an average of 25. 8*d.* per diem;¹ and his duties, during the first few weeks, being confined to packing books for delivery. A little later he was promoted to the advertising department, with a slightly increased salary. He was now at least "assured of daily bread. Naturally painstaking and conscientious, he had done with Bohemia for ever; he had begun life, he was saved."²

Yet it was only by force of will that he accustomed himself to a round of comparative drudgery. If Bohemianism implied poverty, it meant liberty also; and, like many of us, Zola found it hard to have to work regularly, at set tasks and set hours. Again, it worried him that he had no oppor-

tunity to read all the books that passed
through his hands.
But necessity compelled obedience to
discipline, and he
ended by discharging his clerkly duties fairly
well, while
allowing full rein to his literary bent every
evening and
every Sunday. He turned, however, from
poetry to prose,
not, it would seem, because he doubted his
poetical faculty,

¹ About sixty-four cents, American currency.

² Alexis, *1. c.*, p. 56.